Communications are excellent in the coastal districts, but some parts of the interior are inaccessible, especially during the winter months, when snow accumulates on the mountain ridges. Good roads stretch north and south along the coast and in the Bekaa, but the lateral connections are restricted by the nature of the terrain and the shortage of suitable natural passes across the mountains. Trunk highways skirt the coast and extend from Beirut to Damascus, linking Lebanon and Syria. Beirut is also united with Damascus by a railway through Rayak, while a line from Rayak through Homs joins the Istanbul-Baghdad railway at Aleppo. Tripoli is linked with the latter system by a branch from Homs. A coastal railroad, extending from Tripoli to Haifa, was constructed by the British military forces during World War II, and the Lebanese portion is still in operation. Beirut, the principal modern port, handles a large volume of transit traffic for Syria, Jordan, Iraq and other parts of the Middle East. Tripoli is a port of secondary significance, except as an oil-shipping center. The ancient port of Sidon has recently been developed as the terminus of the trans-Arabian pipeline, serving as a Mediterranean port for the shipment of oil from the Saudi Arabian fields of the Arabian American Oil Company. The distances between local points are too short for the promotion of internal air services, but Beirut is an important junction for international airlines serving Europe and the Near and the Far East.

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Food and Nutrition

The nutritional standards of the people differ according to the prosperity and the familiarity with food values of the individual families, but they are reasonably high in most parts of the country. Breads and a coarse-grained cereal known as *burghul*, which are usually prepared from wheat but sometimes from barley or millet, are staple foods in both urban and rural areas. Rice is popular among all groups of the population. Liberal amounts of milk are consumed

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63:Simmons et al G-5 (1941-1951) 1954
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in the form of cheese, buttermilk and *leben*, the last a fermented product made from cow's milk. Fresh milk is rarely used, however, except in limited sections in the larger cities. In the rural districts, milk is obtained chiefly from sheep and goats, less frequently from cows. Legumes, potatoes, onions and other vegetables are widely cultivated. Green, leafy varieties are scarce in the inland districts, but wild herbs are often utilized as substitutes. Many types of fruits are abundant, especially in the coastal valleys. They form important supplementary items of diet when in season.

Much of the meat is imported from Syria or Turkey, but relatively little reaches the people outside the larger towns. The average villager seldom consumes meat more than once a week. Mutton and, secondarily, beef are used most extensively. Both are employed, in a cooked or a raw state, in *kubi*, a national dish prepared from meat and *burghul*. Goat meat is found everywhere, while pork is available in the Christian communities. Poultry and eggs are plentiful in most localities and fish in the coastal region. Olive oil and butter are the primary sources of fats.

In spite of the generally satisfactory level of nutrition, a definite decrease in the consumption of protective foods is apparent in the inland districts and in South Lebanon. In 1950, the Lebanese government appointed a Nutrition Committee to promote a better understanding of the elementary principles of nutrition among the people. The different religious customs of the Moslem and the Christian communities influence their nutritional habits and limit the application of mass educational measures.

Housing

Lebanon has a large so-called middle class, and the disparity between the living conditions of the rich and the poor is less pronounced than in most of the neighboring countries. Moreover, many families maintain financial and social contacts with

scribed from Djounieh, on the coast about 30 miles north of Beirut. Microfilaria, supposedly of *Wuchereria bancrofti*, were found in the blood of 3 cases, while the fourth showed symptoms of hydrocele. Local authorities believe that the infection was introduced by African troops stationed in the area during World War II. Potential Culex vectors are abundant.

Nutritional Diseases

Undernutrition is seen predominantly among the children in the congested urban districts and in the poorer villages, where poverty, ignorance and, sometimes, intestinal parasitism are contributory factors. Nutritional diseases are relatively rare, but subclinical manifestations of avitaminosis are frequent. Rickets is often observed in South Lebanon: cases are attributed to the fact that many children are improperly fed and are confined indoors for long periods while their parents are at work in the fields.

Goiter is endemic in the vicinity of Zahle and Djezzin. Cases of cretinism are occasionally encountered.

Miscellaneous Conditions

Sporadic outbreaks of infectious hepatitis are reported, usually in the late summer or the fall. Children are primarily affected, but all age groups are represented in the various epidemics. Cases of encephalitis lethargica are diagnosed from time to time.

Q fever is enzootic among the livestock, and undoubtedly exists to some degree in the general population. In studies from the bacteriology department of the American University of Beirut,[41] a large proportion of positive reactions were obtained in complement fixation tests on blood serum samples from sheep, goats and cattle received from various countries in the Near East. In the serums collected from animals in Beirut, positive reactions were obtained in 25 per cent of 228 sheep tested, in 34 per cent of 134 goats and in 8 per cent of 97 cattle. The reaction rates with the serums from smaller numbers of animals from Tripoli